

English Online Interview - Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains hyperlinks to online resources and is best viewed online.

The document contains a range of questions and answers relevant to the English Online Interview. Click on the relevant link below to go directly to the information you require.

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1. What is the English Online Interview?

The English Online Interview is an assessment program that takes the form of an interview between a teacher and a student, with responses being recorded by the teacher in an online system. The English Online Interview assesses all aspects of English VELS (Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening) and provides a wide range of information for teachers about individual student learning needs. It was used for assessment of Prep-Year 2 students in Victorian government schools for the first time in October 2009 and replaces the mandated *Assessment of Reading P-2* program, which only assessed Reading accuracy. Students will be assessed using the English Online Interview at start of Prep, start of Year 1, and start of Year 2.

Teachers can generate a range of reports about their students and their class, drawing on the data captured by the assessment. Results from each assessment will be linked so that teachers can examine student growth over time. The student assessment results will follow the student if they move from one Victorian government school to another.

2. Alignment to VELS, NAPLAN and Australian Curriculum

How does the English Online Interview align to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)?

The English Online Interview is aligned to VELS. All assessment modules, tasks and questions have been designed to provide information about students in relation to all VELS English Dimensions: Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening.

Although an individual question will only be relevant to one dimension, a task may be relevant to all dimensions.

Once an assessment has been finalised for a student, teachers can generate a report which will indicate the VELS level that is most applicable for the student in each dimension of English. This information may be useful for teachers in preparation of their end of year reports.

There are also reports that allow teachers to see the spread of abilities within their class across each dimension with respect to VELS progression points. This information may be useful for curriculum planning.

Is the English Online Interview aligned to the National Assessment Program Literacy Numeracy, (NAPLAN)?

Yes, the English Online Interview scale has been aligned to NAPLAN. One of the aims of English Online Interview is to make sure it says the same things about a student's ability in English at the end of Year 2 that NAPLAN says when they are assessed in Year 3. The alignment of the English Online Interview scale with the NAPLAN scale for Reading allows a comparison of the description of the two scales where they overlap and an extension to lower levels of the NAPLAN scale. This alignment provides teachers with confidence in the assessment program and how it aligns with other major assessment programs in Victoria and nationally.

When the Australian Curriculum is introduced the Interview will also be aligned to the Australian Curriculum standards.

3. Benefits to Schools

What are the benefits of the English Online Interview?

The English Online Interview is a powerful assessment tool available to teachers. It assesses students in all the dimensions of the English VELS Domain and provides alignment with NAPLAN. The English Online Interview was developed over a two year period of a research and development process in which 4000 students in 100 schools participated. This assessment follows the form of an interview which is most suitable for students in Prep-Year 2 and provides beneficial diagnostic information to teachers in relation to their student's learning of English.

On the whole the benefits of the English Online Interview could be summarised as follows:

- Measures student progress in Years Prep-Year 2 in all English VELS dimensions – Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening.
- Broader scope than *Assessment of Reading P-2*
- Immediate access to student results and to rich diagnostic data on individual students
- Strong alignment to VELS and NAPLAN
- Provides baseline data about English ability for all students at school entry
- The ability to track student achievement and growth online over time
- Evidence to support teacher judgement for report writing
- Data to support school annual reports and Annual Implementation Plans

4. Assessment periods

Why is there a set assessment period?

In order to get an accurate and reliable picture of all students in a school / network / region / state, all students need to be assessed within 4 weeks of one another. For this reason there are firm dates for each assessment period and all student assessments must be completed within the timeframe.

Within the English Online Interview system, school administrators and teachers can generate reports to indicate how far along they have progressed through their required assessments. This information will help schools monitor their progress to ensure they complete the assessments in the required timeframe. Regional and central office personnel will also be generating these reports to monitor individual school progress throughout the assessment period.

5. Support for schools

What support is available to schools?

DEECD staff from all Regions have been trained in the English Online Interview to provide support to schools in their Regions/networks.

Schools should contact their Regions for support and assistance with the English Online Interview

In addition, a range of resources are available for school staff including:

- a dedicated **website** for English Online Interview with resources and additional information:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishonline.htm>
- a **user guide** explaining how the online system works
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/eoiuserguide.pdf>
- Online **Training modules** to guide teachers in completing all standard activities in the interview: <https://onlinetraining.eduweb.vic.gov.au/eot/learner/default.aspx>
- an Online **Training environment** available prior to the formal assessment period to allow teachers to practise completing an interview and familiarise themselves with the online system <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/englishonlinetraining/default.aspx>.

What resources/funding are available to schools to carry out the English Online assessment?

Schools receive annual funding for Early Years Literacy Co-ordination as part of their Student Resource Package (SRP). Previously schools used this funding for administration of the *Assessment of Reading P-2* but it should now be refocussed to support administration of the English Online Interview.

6. Administrative set up and materials for interviewing

The Principal of the school must appoint a School Administrator to set up the Interview for teachers. This involves creating classes, and assigning students and teachers to classes. The [English Online User Guide](#) also provides comprehensive support to setting up the assessment.

What materials will each school receive?

Every Victorian government primary school received kits of resources in 2009, comprising general information and eight books. Each kit comprises books for all three year levels (P, 1, 2), which are intended to be split amongst the year levels. The number of kits a school received depends on the number of P-2 student enrolments.

Regional offices were also supplied with extra copies of the kits and schools should contact their regional offices in the first instance if they believe they require extra kits

All additional information required to support the interview is available online at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishonline.htm>

7. Time considerations and planning for the assessment

How long will it take to complete an assessment?

Feedback from the trials in 100 schools and with 4000 students indicated the English Online Interview is expected to take on average 20–40 minutes per student. Although tasks on the interview are not precisely timed, the nature of the questions and answers determine the pace of the interview and consequently the time taken to complete it. Teachers in charge of the assessment should judge whether a student needs more time to respond to certain questions. However, in usual circumstances, the interview administration should not generally be expected to exceed 60 minutes.

The time taken to complete an interview will become reduced through teacher familiarity and confidence with the program. This is one of the reasons the English Online Interview Training environment is available to enable teachers to familiarise themselves with the interview prior to the commencement of the formal assessment period.

How should the Writing tasks be administered?

The Writing task can be administered to groups or to the class as a whole. This will decrease the total time required to assess each individual student. For the writing task students should be given 30 minutes with 5 minutes finishing up time. This should be sufficient time for students to produce a piece of work that can be assessed.

Where can I conduct the assessment?

Teachers require a relatively quiet place to meet with individual students for the interview, which also allows access to the internet to connect to the English Online Interview system. The interview needs to be conducted where there is access to the internet. If a classroom doesn't have this capacity then the teacher will need to identify an alternative suitable environment.

Will there be paper versions of the English Online Interview?

There is no paper version available. One of the benefits of the English Online Interview is the capacity to capture data online and make data instantly available to schools and teachers. The online system is an integral part of providing this.

Will there be provision for a CD or DVD of the Interview?

The English Online Interview is an online tool and the data is stored centrally for retrieval by teachers and any time after the interview. As such, it will not be provided on a CD format.

Can the stories be produced as audio files so there is a consistent reading of the texts?

Reading the text to a student is only one task within the assessment. The one to one interaction between teacher and student is an important part of the assessment as a whole.

Can you have more than one student open at a time?

Teachers can have all interviews 'in progress' at once. However, they can only be physically interviewing one student at a time and therefore the online system will only allow them to enter data for one student at a time.

How much instruction can teachers provide?

The English Online Interview is a diagnostic assessment to provide teachers with a wide range of information about individual student's learning needs. The interview provides information to teachers throughout each task, including what degree of 'encouragement' is appropriate.

Do word charts around the room need to be removed for the writing task?

Class environments should remain as normal as possible – no special preparations of this kind need to be made.

How early can the administrator set up classes?

Classes should be set up by administrators the week before the assessment period commences. CASES21 data on students enrolled in the school will automatically be imported (it will take 24 hours or overnight to activate) into the English Online Interview.

Is it essential for the class teacher to do the assessment?

The English Online Interview has been specifically designed to be delivered by a student's classroom teacher. Both teacher and student find the interview process immensely valuable for learning and building their relationship with one another.

Can you create groups after the tests are done?

Groups can be created at any time and are very useful for report creation. Students can be assigned to more than one group.

How often do I need to save when conducting the EOI interview?

When you enter data into the English Online Interview, you can save in a number of ways:

1. If you click on **Next** at the bottom of the page, the information you entered on the current task will automatically be saved and you will be able to proceed with the next part of the assessment.
2. If you click on **Save** at the bottom of the page, the information you entered on the current task will be saved. Use this option if you are going to leave the screen temporarily.
3. If you click on the **Save and Pause Assessment** button on the left of the screen, the information you entered on the current page will be saved and you will be taken back to the home page.

There is no need to click on both Save and the Next sequentially. Next includes the Save option.

Will schools receive additional assessment kits if required?

Regional personnel and central staff have a number of additional kits available to cater for anticipated growth in enrolments over time.

Will there be any non-fiction content tested?

As the English Online Interview is enhanced over time, additional text genres may be incorporated.

Are the spelling words changed each year?

No, spelling words remain the same for the modules that contain a spelling task. However, Modules 3 and 4 contain different spelling words.

8. Exemptions / Withdrawals / Absences

Who can be exempted or withdrawn from the assessment?

The English Online Interview is suitable for the majority of students, including ESL students and students with disabilities. The principle of the assessment program is that every Prep-Year 2 student has the right to be assessed due to the value of the interview to their individual learning.

There are only two categories under which a student will not be formally assessed:

- 1. Exemption:** An exemption from being assessed is only permitted where a student is deemed to be unsuitable for assessment in advance of it taking place. This includes a student with a significant intellectual disability such that he/she cannot perform in an assessment situation.
- 2. Withdrawal:** A withdrawal from the assessment program will only be permitted where a student capable of being assessed is:
 - Absent - Student is capable of being assessed but is not available during the assessment period.
 - Temporarily disabled – Student has a temporary disability, disorder or sickness and cannot complete the assessment.

If a child repeats can a module be re-used and compared over the two years?

A child who repeats should be treated like any other child in their class. The reports for the class / cohort will show the student as having done the assessment at the current assessment period. The system will also show past assessments.

Will there be a Detour (Like Maths Online) for students who are well below?

No, the English Online Interview will not include a detour. The Interview is based on four modules.

What if a student can't answer a question?

Each student should only complete questions of which they are capable. When the teacher is clear that the student has answered all they can in a task, the teacher can select 'no attempt' for the questions that cannot be answered by the student and move onto the next task.

9. Students with Additional Needs / Special Provisions

Should students in special school settings undertake the English Online Interview? Are there any exemptions?

The English Online Interview has been developed to assess Reading, Writing and Listening and Speaking in English for all students in Prep-Year 2, including students with special needs. An exemption from the assessment is possible when a student is deemed to be unsuitable for assessment in advance of it taking place. This exemption is for students who have a significant intellectual disability such that he/she cannot perform in an assessment situation. All exemptions must be recorded in the system.

What provision is made for students with special needs to undertake the English Online Interview?

In its first year of implementation the English Online Interview did not provide any special provisions for additional assistance to students with specific disabilities. Following the first year of operation, a review has been undertaken to determine the level of requirements in regard to special provisions for subsequent assessment periods (e.g. Braille, large print books etc.).

Is the English Online Interview relevant to students with special needs even though they are not taught the same curriculum?

All students are provided with instruction based on the VELS. It is recognised that special schools develop a holistic program of learning for their students that may be in complementary areas of learning (such as living skills) deemed relevant for the student. However special schools are still expected to comply with the relevant domains of the VELS including English.

Will student progress impact on funding?

This tool assists teachers and schools to confidently plan programs of learning for their students. The English Online Interview will enable special school teachers to accurately map the progress of their students as do teachers in mainstream schools. This data will provide quality information about the diversity of students in all Victorian schools.

Is this assessment designed for students from special schools?

During 2008 the assessment tool was trialled in 3 special schools. The trials showed the information was valuable for those schools.

What happens with PSD students whose applications are pending but not yet formally recorded onto CASES21?

When the information is available in CASES21, the student will automatically be flagged within the English Online Interview as having a funded disability. You can enter the required information then. Until the student's PSD details are updated in CASES21, assess the student as you would any other student in your class.

Wouldn't it be better to put in all disabilities a child has, rather than just the one for which they are funded?

(Eg. If a child is funded for a physical disability but also has an intellectual disability, the second one would have more impact on their results than the funded disability.)

It is envisaged that as the program progresses, the range of information available about PSD students will be expanded. However, for the first implementation only the funded disability information is to be captured.

10. English as a Second Language students

Should English as a second language (ESL) students undertake the English Online Interview?

All Prep-Year 2 ESL students should attempt the English Online Interview. The English Online Interview is an assessment tool which will provide information about the English development of Prep-Year 2 students, including most ESL students. The principle of the assessment program is that every Prep-Year 2 student should be assessed unless they meet the exemption criteria.

The English Online Interview assesses all aspects of English VELs (Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening) and provides a wide range of information for teachers about individual student learning needs. The results from the assessment will provide teachers with information about ESL students' responses to the various aspects that have been assessed, such as phonemic awareness and comprehension. Such an analysis will help teachers of ESL students to consider which aspects of the assessment their students have performed well at, and which have been most challenging.

Assessing ESL students with the English Online Interview will provide teachers with the opportunity to observe how far their students are on track to achieving the transition from the ESL Companion to VELs to English VELs. The ESL Companion to VELs can be used to obtain further detailed understanding on the ESL student's progress.

Each Prep-Year 2 ESL student should complete only what they are capable of completing. If a teacher concludes that the student has answered all questions they can in a task, the teacher should select "no attempt" for the questions that cannot be answered and move onto the next task.

What information should be added to the student details page?

Students identified as ESL in CASES21 will appear with additional information on their student details page. Additional detail will need to be added by the classroom teacher and the Update button clicked, before the appropriate Module for the year level can be selected.

Which ESL stage should I select?

The *ESL developmental continuum* provides additional information for deciding the ESL stage appropriate for an ESL student. Refer to the lower primary stages (the A Stages) at

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/esl/default.htm>

If you are unsure about the ESL Stage and wish to continue with the assessment, select the Unknown option.

11. Entering Student Details

How are student details entered into the English Online Interview

Student information from CASES21 will automatically be reflected in the English Online Interview system. The English Online Interview system has been developed to collect data for every Prep-Year 2 student by means of the Victorian Student Number (VSN), once available for use. Every student will have their data stored centrally to allow for student achievement and growth to be tracked online from the start of Prep to the end of Year 2.

12. Accessing and Interpreting Reports

How do I access student achievement data from the Interview?

A range of reports have been developed to present the information from the assessment in a variety of ways. These include both reports for individuals, as well as reports for groups, classes and schools. All reports can be filtered so that teachers and schools can control what they see in reports and how they are displayed. For example, reports will provide information on student performance within a class or a year level. Teachers can download all data to Excel to undertake further investigation of the data, as needed. Reports can also be saved as PDF files to form part of a student's portfolio of learning. It will be up to schools to interrogate the data the way they need or utilise the predetermined reports.

Teachers will benefit immensely from the immediate access to student results and the rich diagnostic information gathered about individual students. Once a teacher has finalised a student's assessment, they can immediately generate a range of different reports online. Assessment results will remain online so that teachers can refer to them in the future to inform their planning. Schools will be able to run reports at student, group, class and cohort levels. It will be a robust set of data that will allow for analysis at different levels. Results from the English Online Interview will provide evidence to support teacher judgements for report writing, resource allocation and data to support school Annual Reports and Implementation Plans.

How do I interpret the results from the Interview

The document [Interpreting English Online Interview results](#) located at: provides information on the scoring and interpretation of results. Key information from the document is presented in the power point presentation [Interpreting student results](#)

What is the VELS range of ability for each Module?

The VELS levels covered by the Modules are adequate to cover the range of abilities within the Prep-Year 2 cohort.

When will data be available to regions and the Centre?

Regions can access the data at the end of the assessment period, once all schools have completed their student assessments. The Regions and the Centre will be able to analyse the data and provide general information on specific cohorts of students at regional and state levels.

13. The existing Assessment of Reading P-2

What happens to existing individual school assessment schedules for P-2?

English Online was originally commissioned to overcome limitations of the existing mandated *Assessment of Reading P-2* program and replace it. The English Online Interview is more comprehensive than the *Assessment of Reading P-2* and assesses Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening ability as opposed to Reading accuracy only. The broader assessment content will deliver a greater breadth and depth of information to teachers, schools and the system than has previously been available.

All Interview tasks have been developed to reliably measure student achievement across Prep-Year 2. The tasks included in the assessment provide a broad coverage of the assessments already used in schools to assess English (e.g. Clay's Observation Survey, Running Records, Burt reading Test). The number of items included in each task may not correlate exactly to the other assessment tools, however the skills assessed are compatible. For this reason, it is not necessary for teachers to implement both assessment programs at this time of the year. The English Online Interview forms part of an overall assessment schedule that will provide thorough results for each student in every area of English to enable teachers to gauge individual strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers should refer to the [Comparison to other literacy assessments](#) for further information on the relationship between English Online and other literacy assessments.

Data from the existing *Assessment of Reading P-2* program is not made available to schools until several months after the assessment taking place. By contrast, the English Online Interview will deliver immense value to teachers at the time of assessment. Data collected through English Online will be accessible to teachers instantaneously via a range of predetermined reports on individual students and their classes. English Online brings with it the ability to track student learning and growth from the start of Prep to the end of Year 2, since every assessment undertaken on a student is made accessible online to a student's current teacher. This will be extremely useful in planning individualised learning programs.

14. Reliability and consistency of the assessment

How can reliability of assessment results be ensured when multiple teachers across the state assess students?

The assessment instrument is robust and has undergone rigorous testing through the pilot process to ensure consistency of the assessment. All questions in the assessment were trialled twice with 4000 students and hundreds of teachers. Results from the trialling of the English Online Interview indicate high inter-rater reliability, meaning there is confidence that different teachers assess students in a consistent way. The marking rubrics used to assign students to response categories during the assessment have been developed to ensure objectivity and clarity for teachers administering the assessment.

The English Online Interview has been developed in order to minimise the impact of multiple teachers administering the assessment within a class. It is specifically designed to be administered by a student's classroom teacher. The reasons behind this are that the classroom teacher has knowledge about each student that is valuable to the interview, and that both teacher and student find the interview process immensely valuable for learning and their relationship with one another. This also ensures the consistency of administration for all students within a class.

Will the writing analysis be skewed by teacher subjectivity? When teachers mark students' writing, they use the marking guide provided within the Interview. To support them in this process and to provide them with samples of student writing associated with each module, a set of Annotated Writing Samples are available to teachers. These Annotated Writing Samples were collected through the trials of the project with 4000 in 100 schools.

15. Technical issues and support

Specialist Technicians are asked to assist schools in accessing English Online by preserving school link bandwidth during the assessment period.

Advice for School Technicians

Over the English online assessment periods:

- Avoid or throttle unessential bandwidth intensive use of the school VicSMART connection during business hours, e.g. scheduled content download jobs, ISO images.
- Monitor VicSMART bandwidth usage through the tools available at <http://broadband.doe.wan/bbportal>. Diagnose excessive usage issues as required.
- Use eduPaSS as the recommended proxy solution which provides the correct WAN exclusion list (attached at appendix 1)
- Regularly conduct scans of your school curriculum network for trojans, worms, malware and inappropriate file downloads which could contribute to school link congestion.
- If required, during periods of peak use of English Online, explore options with your school to leverage current ISP tools to restrict internet use to EduList only over the peak periods.

Additional Information

- If you have any queries please contact your Regional Service Delivery Manager via the DEECD Service Desk on 1800 641 943 or via the Service Gateway on <http://servicedesk.education.vic.gov.au>.

Who do I contact if I have technical problems?

Refer to the User Guide, Regional English Online Interview personnel, and/or the IT Help Desk (ph: 1800 641 943, servicedesk@edumail.vic.gov.au)